

KINGSBRIDGE AND SALCOMBE PORT HEALTH AUTHORITY

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR THE YEAR 1955

The Report is prepared in the form required by the Ministry of Health (Circular 33/52) of the 6th November, 1952.

SECTION I - STAFF

TABLE A

Name of Officer.	Nature of Appointment.	Date of Appointment.	Qualifications.	Any other appointments held
Dr. W.C.Smales.	Medical Officer of Health.	1st May, 1944.	M.R.C.S. (Eng). L.R.C.P. (Lond). D.P.H. (Dub).	Medical Officer of Health - Plympton, R.D.C. Kingsbridge R.D.C. Kingsbridge U.D.C. Salcombe U.D.C. South Devon Water Board.
Dr. R.H.Dummett.	Deputy Medical Officer of Health.	1st October, 1944.	M.B. Ch.B.	
Mr. R.J.Nichols.	Sanitary Inspector.	1st April, 1951.	Cert. R.S.I.	Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector - Salcombe U.D.C.

Address and telephone number of Dr.W.C.Smales, The Lodge, Yealmpton, the Medical Officer of Health. Plymouth. Telephone No :- Yealmpton 78.
Address and telephone number of Dr. R.H.Dummett, Holmleigh, Salcombe. the Deputy Medical Officer of Health. Telephone No :- Salcombe 12.

SECTION II - Amount of shipping entering the district during the year

TABLE B

Ships from	Number	Tonnage	Number inspected		Number of ships reported as having or having had during the voyage, infectious disease on board.
			By the Medical Officer of Health.	By the Sanitary Inspector.	
Foreign Ports	181	2425	-	-	-
Coastwise	420	5526	-	-	-
TOTAL	601	7951	-	-	-

SECTION III - Character of shipping and trade during the year

TABLE C

PASSENGER TRAFFIC

Number of passengers INWARDS - Nil.
Number of passengers OUTWARDS - Nil.

TABLE C (Contd)

CARGO TRAFFIC

Principal IMPORTS - Nil.

Principal EXPORTS - Nil.

PRINCIPAL PORTS from which ships arrive - Channel Islands, North Coast of France (Cameret) and coastwise yachts.

Character of shipping - 69 yachts arrived from the Channel Islands and the North Coast of France. 420 coastwise yachts.

It is estimated that about 988 persons landed from the yachts.

104 French fishing vessels (Crabbers) came into port from Cameret and Painpol. None from infected ports.

SECTION IV - Inland Barge Traffic

Nil.

SECTION V - Water Supply.

- (1) (a) South Devon Water Board.
(b) South Devon Water Board.
- (2) Frequent analyses are made - results satisfactory.
- (3) Hydrants protected by chambers and covers. All obsolete ones have been replaced. Hosepipes sterilised by chlorox solution.
- (4) Sanitary conditions satisfactory. Inspected by Customs Officer, Medical Officer of Health and Sanitary Inspector. Tanks cleansed and sterilised at the beginning of the season and afterwards when found necessary. Water samples taken on two occasions were unsatisfactory, but after cleansing and sterilisation of the tanks, the remaining samples proved satisfactory.

SECTION VI - Public Health-(Ships) Regulations, 1952.

- (1) Weekly Records of Quarantinable Diseases issued by the Ministry of Health filed and available for reference. Copy of the list of seaports in which a confirmed or suspected case of a quarantinable disease has occurred is forwarded to the Customs Officer.
- (2) It is understood that any ships wishing to land passengers would wireless their agents who would inform the Customs Officer. No passenger vessel arrived at Salcombe during the period under review, and none arrived from infected ports.
- (3) The signal stations at Prawle and Start would receive or send messages, visual or radio.
- (4) The approved mooring station is The Range, situated outside the Bar between Jone's Wall and Queen's Head.
- (5) (a) The City Isolation Hospital, Plymouth.
(b) If a case of infectious disease is landed from a vessel, all persons on board are regarded as contacts, and are kept under surveillance throughout the incubation period during their stay in port. When contacts land, their names and addresses are taken, and these particulars are forwarded to the Medical Officer of Health of the District to which they are proceeding so that they may be kept under observation until the quarantine period has elapsed.

SECTION VI (Contd).

- (c) When a case of infectious disease is removed from a ship, the quarters on board are disinfected by Formalin. Cleansing and disinfection of persons, clothing and other articles can be carried out in the City of Plymouth by arrangement with the Medical Officer of Health.

SECTION VII - Smallpox.

- (1) The Smallpox Hospital (Smallpox Hospital, Liskeard, Cornwall) in the Plymouth Clinical Area.
- (2) The Plymouth Ambulance Service, Greenbank, Plymouth.
Telephone No. :- Plymouth 64101.
- (3) Dr. W.A.Lister, 7, The Crescent, Plymouth. Telephone No :- Plymouth 65701 and Devonport 40).
Dr. D.F.Johnstone, The Scott Isolation Hospital, Plymouth, or in his absence, his Deputy must be informed immediately and invited to come and see the case. Telephone No:- Plymouth 64311.
(Ministry of Health Panel of Practitioners designated to assist the Medical Officer of Health in the diagnosis of smallpox).
- (4) The Virus Reference Laboratory, Central Public Health Laboratory, Colindale Avenue, London, N.W.9.

A Memorandum has been prepared enumerating the measures to be carried out in the event of the occurrence of Smallpox in the district. This has been circulated to all concerned and a copy has been sent to the Ministry of Health (15th July, 1952).

SECTION VIII - Venereal Disease.

Plymouth, South Devon and East Cornwall General Hospital Group.
Special Treatment Centre.
South Devon and East Cornwall Hospital, Freedom Fields, Plymouth.
Hours of attendance.

Males - Monday - 6 to 7.30 p.m.
Tuesday - 10 to 11.30 a.m.
Wednesday - 10.30 to 12 noon.
Thursday - 6 to 7.30 p.m.
Saturday - 6 to 7.30 p.m.

Copies of these arrangements issued to all concerned.

SECTION IX - Cases of notifiable and other infectious disease on ships.

TABLE D.

Category	Disease	Number of cases during the year.		Number of ships concerned
		Passengers.	Crew.	
Cases landed from ships from foreign ports.	-	-	-	-
Cases which have occurred on ships from foreign ports but have been disposed of before arrival.	-	-	-	-
Cases landed from other ships.	-	-	-	-

SECTION X - Observations on the occurrence of Malaria on ships.
Nil.

SECTION XI - Measures taken against ships infected with or suspected for Plague.
Nil

SECTION XII - Measures against rodents in ships from foreign ports.

- (1) The Customs Officer makes the necessary enquiries.
- (2) Specimens may be sent to the City Pathologist, South Devon and East Cornwall Hospital, Plymouth, for examination: No rodents were sent for examination during the year.
- (3) and
- (4) Not applicable.
Satisfactory rodent control is carried out in Salcombe by the Urban District Council.

TABLE E.

Rodents destroyed during the year in ships from foreign ports.

Category	Number
Black rats	Nil
Brown rats	Nil
Species not known	Nil
Sent for examination	Nil
Infected with Plague	Nil

TABLE F.

Deratting Certificates and Deratting Exemption Certificates issued during the year for ships from foreign ports.

No. of Deratting Certificates issued.					Number of Deratting Exemption Certificates issued.	Total Certificates issued
After fumigation with HGN	Other fumigant (state method)	After trapping.	After Poisoning.	Total		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

The French Crabbers lie in the stream and do not come alongside.
There are no approved wharfs in Salcombe.

SECTION XIII - Inspection of ships for nuisances.

TABLE G.

Inspections and Notices.

Nature and number of Inspections.	Notices served.		Result of serving notices.
	Statutory Notices	Other Notices.	
Nil	Nil	Nil	-

SECTION XIV - Public Health (Shell-Fish) Regulations, 1934 and 1948.

The Kingsbridge and Salcombe Estuary receives the whole of the sewage from the townships of Kingsbridge and Salcombe in an untreated state, and consequently special measures are necessary in regard to shell-fish.

Shell-Fish. Under the Public Health (Shell-Fish) Regulations, the taking of Cockles, winkles, Limpets or Mussels from any part of the Kingsbridge Estuary inside Salcombe Bar for the purpose of sale for human consumption is prohibited unless they are :-

- (i) Subjected to a satisfactory process of cleansing at an Establishment which is for the time being approved by the Minister of Health for the purpose; or
- (ii) Relaid in pure water for such period and in such places as may from time to time be approved for the purpose by the said Authority; or
- (iii) Subjected to a process of sterilisation by steam under pressure for at least six minutes in an apparatus which is for the time being approved by the said Authority.

NOTE: With reference to para (ii), this method of purification is not considered suitable under local conditions.

Oyster Laying in the Estuary.

Investigations have been carried out by Dr. Hancock of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food into the possible causes of the pollution of oysters in the Estuary, and a copy of this report is attached hereto.

SECTION XV - Medical Inspection of Aliens (applicable only to ports approved for the landing of aliens).

Not applicable.

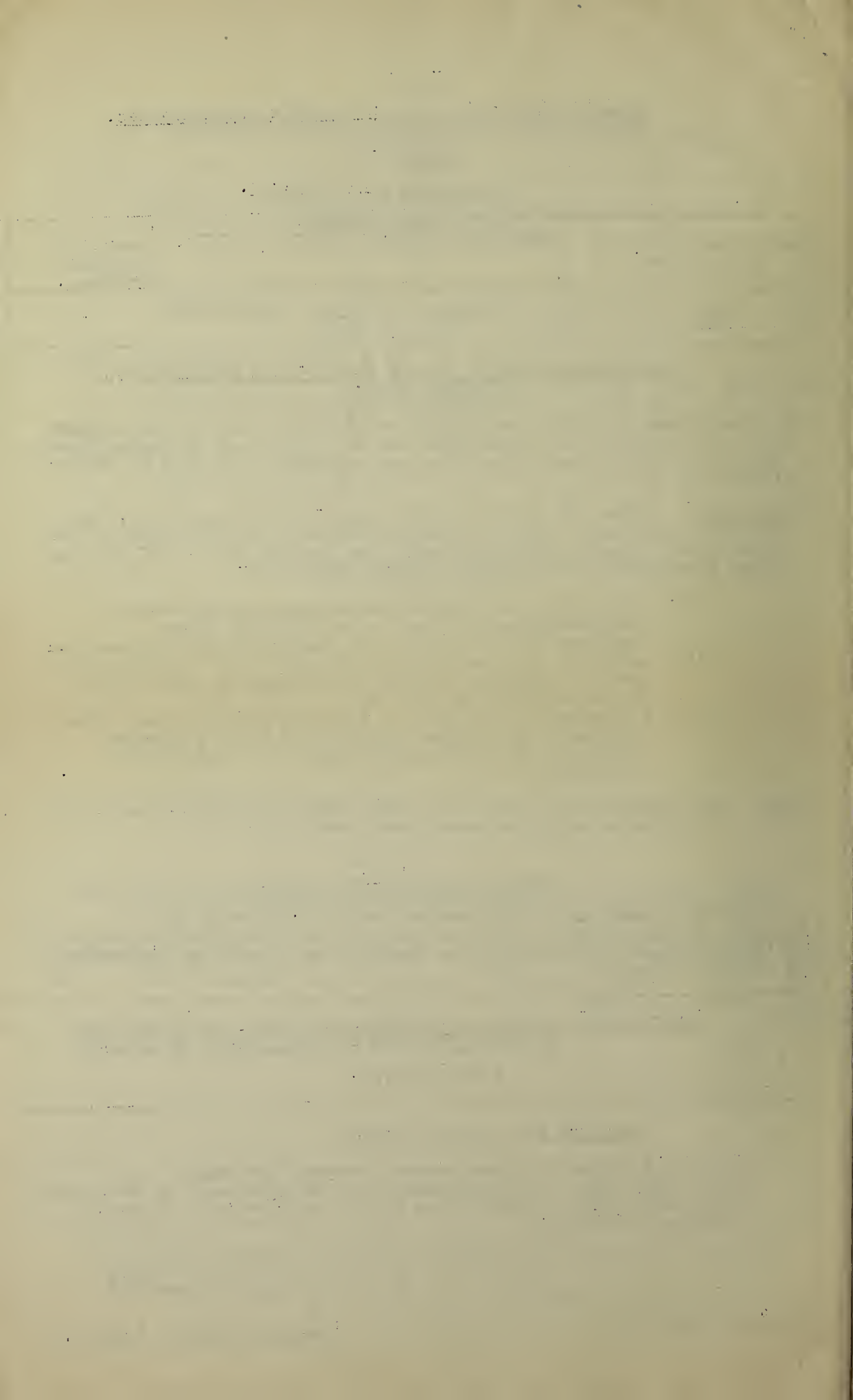
SECTION XVI - Miscellaneous.

There is a Mortuary in Shadycombe Cemetery, Salcombe. Agents make their own arrangements for the interment of the dead. Where deaths have occurred from any of the five major diseases, cremation is advised..

K. C. Smiles.

February, 1956.

Medical Officer of Health.



POSSIBLE CAUSES OF DEATH AMONGST OYSTERS RELAID AT
SALCOMBE

It is believed that the greatest mortality occurred amongst oysters transported from Essex to Salcombe, although many of these showed good growth. The bottom on which the oysters were laid contained a very high proportion of sand, particularly at the Salcombe end of the ground, and although under normal conditions this is not detrimental to oysters, in turbulent conditions abrasion or suffocation of oysters may occur.

High mortalities were recorded at Salcombe in September of both 1953 and 1954. These were associated with high winds which, together with the strong tide over the oyster ground towards low water time would cause turbulence and shifting of the sand. In 1954, there was virtually no shell growth of oysters and the edges were weakened by the boring worm Polydora. In this condition they would be particularly susceptible to the ill effects of sand movement.

If, as suspected, there was a better survival among Brittany oysters, it suggests that the Essex oysters were not acclimatised to their changed conditions and were therefore more likely to succumb to adverse conditions. Brittany oysters would be in an environment not unlike their normal habitat on the French coast.

In order to study further their supposed causes of mortality, consignments of oysters from Brittany and the Fal were relaid at Salcombe in the spring of 1955. When examined in late September, 1955, all oysters were found to have grown and fattened well with a negligible mortality. The few oysters remaining from previous relayings also showed little loss. It is significant that there were no high winds in September, and good growing conditions had reduced the bad effects of the worm Polydora. These oysters will be examined again in the spring of 1956.

Pollution

(a) Industrial pollution

The Medical Officer of Health, Dr. W. C. Smales, reported that there are no trade effluents from Salcombe. Gas is supplied from Torquay, so that there is no gas works discharge there. At Kingsbridge, there is a Gas Works, in which water is used for quenching coke, cooling and scrubbing coal gas and washing carburetted crater gas. The water is conducted through various purifying works before being discharged to the sewers at a rate of 3,000 gallons in 24 hours. There are no other trade effluents.

(b) Survey of bacterial content of Shell-fish

Samples of oysters and other shell-fish were taken from various stations in the estuary, and subjected to tests. The Bacteriological Report is attached as an appendix to this report. It can be seen that the greatest source of pollution is at Kingsbridge, and there appears not to be serious pollution from either Frogmore Creek nor the Salcombe end of the estuary. The position of the oyster laying is such that the oysters require treatment before marketing.

(c) Sewage Disposal

The position of the various sewage outfalls are shown on the attached map. There is no sewage treatment undertaken at Kingsbridge or Salcombe, although it is understood that more efficient sewage schemes are under consideration. The standing population at Salcombe is 2,500, Kingsbridge Urban 3,140 and Kingsbridge Rural 11,840, but during the summer months these populations are more than doubled. At Salcombe the sewage is discharged at all states of the tide.

Bacteriological Report

Sample No.	Date	Origin	State of Tide	Flesh Volume (ml.)	Bact. coli per ml. of flesh		Sanitary grading (Sherwood & Scott Thompson 1953). Monthly bulletin of Min. Health No. 12, p. 103.
					Individual	Pool	
1.	5.4.54.	Salstone Pt. Upper end of laying.	About L.W.	12.10.7.11.	13.2.15.1.	8	Grade II
2.	5.4.54.	Tosnus Pt. Lower end of laying.	Ebbing	10.4.10.6.7.	5.0.13.46.8.	14	Grade II
3.	6.4.54.	Prossmore Ck. Shore.	Before L.W.	2.5.5.4.3. (1 cockle, 4 <u>Paphia</u>)	3.0.0.1.2.	6	Grade II
4.	6.4.54.	Ox. Pt. shore.	Before L.W.	25.2.5.5.3. (Scallop, cockle & 3 <u>Paphia</u>)	2.1.3.1.9.	4.5	Grade I
5.	6.4.54.	Between Ibertsons & Snape Pt. Nr. L.W. mark	Before L.W.	11.6.12.8.	0.0.0.5	2.5	Grade I

